
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

JASON CHRISTIAN VARNER,

Petitioner,

versus

DIRECTOR, TDCJ-ID,

Respondent.

CIVIL ACTION NO. 1:19-CV-199

**MEMORANDUM ORDER OVERRULING OBJECTIONS AND ADOPTING
THE MAGISTRATE JUDGE'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Jason Christian Varner, an inmate confined within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Correctional Institutions Division, proceeding *pro se*, filed this petition for writ of habeas corpus pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2254. Petitioner challenges a prison disciplinary conviction.

The court referred this matter to the Honorable Zack Hawthorn, United States Magistrate Judge, at Beaumont, Texas, for consideration pursuant to applicable laws and orders of the court. The magistrate judge has submitted a Report and Recommendation of United States Magistrate Judge recommending the petition be dismissed.

The court has received the Report and Recommendation of United States Magistrate Judge, along with the record, pleadings, and all available evidence. Petitioner filed objections to the Report and Recommendation. The court must therefore conduct a *de novo* review of the objections in relation to the pleadings and the applicable law.

Inmates charged with prison disciplinary offenses are entitled to certain procedural safeguards when the punishment imposed implicates a protected liberty interest. *Sandin v. Connor*, 515 U.S. 472, 483-84 (1995). However, petitioner did not lose previously earned good conduct time credits as a result of the disciplinary conviction. As a result, the magistrate judge correctly concluded the punishment petitioner received did not implicate a protected liberty interest and that he was therefore not entitled to any procedural safeguards.

ORDER

Accordingly, petitioner's objections are **OVERRULED**. The findings of fact and conclusions of law of the magistrate judge are correct and the report of the magistrate judge is **ADOPTED**. A final judgment will be entered dismissing the petition.

In addition, the court is of the opinion petitioner is not entitled to a certificate of appealability. An appeal from a final judgment denying habeas relief may not proceed unless a judge issues a certificate of appealability. *See 28 U.S.C. § 2253*. The standard for a certificate of appealability requires the petitioner to make a substantial showing of the denial of a federal constitutional right. *See Slack v. McDaniel*, 529 U.S. 473, 483-84 (2000). In order to make a substantial showing, the petitioner need not establish that he would prevail on the merits. Rather, he must demonstrate that the issues raised in the petition are subject to debate among jurists of reason, that a court could resolve the issues in a different manner, or that the questions presented are worthy of encouragement to proceed further. *See Slack*, 529 U.S. at 483-84. Any doubt regarding whether to grant a certificate of appealability should be resolved in favor of the petitioner, and the severity of the penalty may be considered in making this determination. *See Miller v. Johnson*, 200 F.3d 274, 280-81 (5th Cir. 2000).

In this case, the petitioner has not shown that the issues raised are subject to debate among jurists of reason. The factual and legal questions raised by petitioner have been consistently resolved adversely to his position and the questions presented are not worthy of encouragement to proceed further. As a result, a certificate of appealability shall not issue in this matter.

SIGNED at Beaumont, Texas, this 29th day of July, 2019.



MARCIA A. CRONE
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE